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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 001610

SIPDIS

AF FOR A/S KANSTEINER
AF/S FOR DELISI AND KRAFT
AF/RA FOR JOHN WALSER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/09/2007

TAGS: PREL PTER PGOV ZI

SUBJECT: THE TAKE FROM ZIMBABWE ON WORKING WITH UNSC 1373
AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO BOLSTER AFRICAN
COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS

REF: STATE 128067

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY DCM ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD
FOR REASONS 1.5 B AND D.

¶1. (C) Embassy Harare strongly endorses the use of SADC to bolster counterterrorism efforts in this region generally, and specifically in the Zimbabwe context. On the ground in Zimbabwe, we have enjoyed close, instantaneous and productive cooperation from the Zimbabwean security services, both police and intelligence, on counterterrorism (CT) matters. To date, this collaboration has produced tangible results.

¶2. (C) In other areas, both on the political and economic planes, we have fared less well. Following September 11, the GOZ paid ample lip service to counterterrorism and, at our request, offered a senior MFA official as their point of contact with us. In practical terms, this has yielded almost nothing. Consumed by pre-electoral politics, obsessed by the notion of an anti-Zimbabwe conspiracy in the West, and now facing famine and a catastrophic economic decline, the preoccupied Zimbabweans have taken action in virtually none of the non-operational CT areas where we solicited cooperation. There has been no movement on parliamentary ratification of several unsigned UN counterterrorism conventions or Central Bank pressure for stiffer anti-money laundering legislation that has real teeth. Given our current estrangement from the GOZ, and a virtual (GOZ imposed) freeze on relations with the MFA, we harbor little hope that additional lobbying efforts on this end will yield the results we seek.

¶3. (C) In this context, SADC is probably the best vehicle available to engage the Zimbabweans constructively on counterterrorism issues of importance to us. The GOZ has apparently not engaged the UN Counterterrorism Council to date, but we think that they would be more responsive to regional pressure to undertake regional initiatives or to coordinate to a greater degree with the UN. In the event that USG contacts with SADC present opportunities for greater multilateral CT activities, we think that it would be in our own interest to make certain that Zimbabweans are encouraged and allowed to participate.

SULLIVAN